

Media Release

21 February 2020

A safe play area is opened at ChildSafe

Playgrounds are a great way for kids to get exercise and explore, and with active supervision and some basic safety tips, every day at the playground can be a walk in the park. ChildSafe, an injury prevention unit based at the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital, in partnership with Woolworths, has provided a safe play environment for the hospital's young patients to enjoy, explore, test their skills and meet other children. ChildSafe aims to prevent unintentional injuries such as burns, road traffic crashes, drowning and falls. ChildSafe believes that every child has a right to grow and flourish in a safe environment without the threat of serious injury. The new playground is one of the few with rubber shock absorbing surface which will cushion a fall better than on asphalt, concrete, grass or dirt.



Photo by Dwyane Evans (In the photo man is Dr Beyers (Medical manager), lady Lulu Khumalo (Head of Corporate Affairs, Woolworths))



Photo of Zamacube Tshotwana

“Playground falls are an important cause of childhood injury, which cannot be ignored. Last year, the Trauma Unit at Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital treated around 475 children for injuries that occurred on the playground”, said Professor Sebastian van As, Head of Trauma Unit.

“Falls are the most common playground injury and the lack of, or improper supervision is associated with nearly half of these playground-related injuries” said Yolande Baker, Executive Director of ChildSafe.

ChildSafe reminds parents and caregivers of the following 3 playground safety tips.

1. **Actively supervise children on playgrounds.** It won’t be hard – they’ll probably be calling for you to watch them climb, jump and swing.

2. **Dress appropriately for the playground.** Remove necklaces, purses, scarves or clothing with drawstrings that can get caught on equipment and pose a strangulation hazard. Even helmets can be dangerous on a playground, so save those for bikes.

3. **Teach children that pushing, shoving or crowding while on the playground can be dangerous.** Encourage the older kids to look out for the younger ones. Little kids play differently than big kids. It is important to have a separate play area for children under 5.

The installation of the ChildSafe play environment is as a result of the current upgrade of the Hospital's Emergency Centre. This project comes after a much-needed upgrade – addressing delays and disruptions so that critically ill patients and their families are given the best possible care and support. Building work began in April 2019 and will be delivered in two phases that run until 2020. Designed in partnership with the Hospital Management team, improvements will include an upgrade of medical and trauma resuscitation areas, and an increase in the number of consultation and procedure rooms. The project will also add new areas to the centre, including; quarantine, a rehydration corner, a containment room, a new child protection unit and family friendly waiting areas.

For more information about playground safety, call 021 685 5280 or visit www.childsafe.org.za

To donate to Children's Hospital Trust: cht@chtrust.org.za / 021 686 7860